

Education Abroad in China: Literature Review of Study Abroad Program Types, Outcomes and Benefits

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While there has been an increase in students studying abroad in China, this increase has not been seen in the respective number of articles published in scholarly journals on education abroad in China. This paper summarizes articles from journals on the types of education abroad programs in China, organized by topic, and by the outcomes and benefits of the programs as stated in the articles. The basis for this review is relevant literature from full-text journals published from 1975 to 2013. Of 213 returns from an online search, 25 were relevant for this literature review. The benefits and outcomes of education abroad in China culled from this literature review are compared to the list of ten main outcomes of study abroad programs presented by Parsons (2010). In addition, outcomes not listed by Parsons were identified.

China's rising importance in the global economy and politics today has increased its global stature and influence. China has transitioned from "... a veritable hermit state in the 1960s to a cultural lodestone in the early 21st century," (Ding and Saunders, 2006, p. 3) and China has effectively used its "soft" power, promotion of Chinese language study and culture to improve its international standing (Ding & Saunders, 2006; Xinrong, 2011).

Consider the following excerpt from the U.S. Department of State on China's increasing importance to the United States:

Citing the strategic importance of the U.S.-China relationship, in November 2009, President Barack Obama announced the "100,000 Strong" initiative, a national effort designed to increase dramatically the number and diversify the composition of American students studying in China. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton officially launched the initiative in May 2010 in Beijing. The Chinese government strongly supports the initiative and has already committed 10,000 "Bridge Scholarships" for American students to study in China.

This initiative seeks to prepare the next generation of U.S. experts on China who will be charged with managing the growing political, economic and cultural ties between the United States and China. The initiative also seeks to develop specific opportunities and funding sources for underrepresented students to study in China.

The increase in the numbers of U.S. students studying abroad in China has been dramatic. During the 2000/2001 academic year, 2,942 U.S. students studied abroad in China (Institute of International Education, 2003). During the 2010/2011 school year, this number increased to 14,596, making China the fifth most popular study abroad destination during this year for U.S.

students, behind the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and France (Institute of International Education, 2012).

Education Abroad Programs in China: Benefits and Outcomes

This section addresses the question “What types of education abroad programs in China are represented in the literature?” After a review of relevant literature from a search using the terms “study abroad” and “China” on 67 EBSCO Host databases , the results are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Types of Education Abroad Programs in China

1. Chinese Language Study
2. Study at Chinese Universities
3. International School Study
4. Pre-Service Professional Training/Internships
5. Ethnographic Research & Field Work
6. International Business, Economics and Marketing Study, Research & Field Work
7. Environmental Study
8. Technological Research
9. Travel/Study & Travel
10. Musical Performance Tour
11. College/University Study Abroad Administration

This section reviews the literature search within the categories identified in Table 1 and presents outcomes of the education abroad programs in China that are noted in this literature, addressing the second question, “What are the stated benefits and outcomes of study abroad in China?”

Chinese Language Study

Chinese language study is one of the primary purposes of study abroad to China. China has been able to increase its global influence through Mandarin language programs which help promote its culture and support its foreign relations and foreign policy goals (Erard, 2006). Chinese language study is becoming increasingly more popular around the world, both inside and outside of China (Liu Tao, 2009). The ascendancy of Chinese language studies is a source of pride to many Chinese people, and is a reflection of China’s rising status on the world stage in terms of economic, political and military might (Liu & Tao, 2009). Ning views a shift occurring with China, similar to that of the use of the English language globally, tied to England’s and then the United States’ dominant economic, political, cultural and intellectual power globally (Ning, 2010). Ning sees Chinese culture and language benefiting from globalization and taking on an increasingly important role on the world stage.

Research on Chinese Language Study. Liu (2010) conducted a study of the effects of an 8-week intensive at-home Chinese language immersion instruction preparation program in the summer of 2007 on twelve students at universities in southern California and a subsequent study abroad program in China in the summer of 2008, which included taking two courses in Qingdao, China for four weeks and two weeks travel in Beijing. The results of the study indicate that the at-home preparation program helped contribute to the program's success in improving the students' language proficiency by building their self-confidence and decreasing their anxiety, and Liu (2010) points out that the program improved the participants' employment prospects involving China and the Chinese language. Liu (2010) adds, "Most of the students, 83.3% ($n = 10$), indicated that the program helped them improve their Chinese and advance their careers The prior, intensive, at-home coursework helped them interact with native students during study abroad in China" (pp. 540-541).

Winke and Teng (2010) conducted a study on the development of pragmatics during an 8-week study abroad program in 2006, Michigan State University (Tianjin) summer language program in Tianjin, China, in which 19 Michigan State University students aged 19 to 22 participated. The aim of the study abroad program was to develop students' speaking and writing fluency, motivate students to continue Chinese study through an advanced level by maximizing their exposure to Chinese culture and language, widen students' understanding of Chinese people and society and consequently widen their horizons and make them better global citizens (Winke & Teng, 2010). The students used pragmatics learning journals and a task-based pragmatics tutorial program during the study, and they showed a statistically significant improvement from their pre- to post-test scores on oral pragmatics use (Winke & Teng, 2010). Winke and Teng (2010) note, "This demonstrates that a lot of pragmatic competence can be gained in a rather short program" (p. 376). Evaluation of end-of-program surveys indicated that a majority of the students felt the tutorials were beneficial in helping improve their Chinese language skills and understanding of Chinese culture (Winke & Teng, 2010).

Du (2013) conducted a study on the language development of 28 Americans and one New Zealander, aged 19 to 22, participating in a Mandarin Chinese study abroad program at a university in eastern China during the fall semester of 2008. The results of the study by Du (2013) show a correlation between increased time on task using the target language with greater improvement in fluency development, particularly in the program's first month, which can be attributed to speaking opportunities both inside and outside of class. These results show that participation in study abroad can improve language learners' proficiency in the target language and the particularly strong fluency gains made by students in the first month of the program support the value of short-term study abroad programs.

Personal Accounts of Chinese Language Study. When he was 20 years old, Dines (2008), an Australian, went to China in 1979, where he studied Chinese at Nanjing Teachers College for 16 months. Dines (2008) discusses some of the challenges living in China at that time and points

out that the program in which he studied failed, with most students leaving China within one year, when they were supposed to have stayed for two years. Dines (2008) briefly discusses China's social, political and economic development, and his knowledge of China's development and his position as president of China BHP Billiton at the time he wrote this article suggest his early experiences living and studying in China were beneficial in his career development.

When he was studying Chinese at a university in Belgium, Borgonjon (2008) received a scholarship to study in Nanjing in 1983, but he returned to Belgium. Borgonjon (2008) notes that his Nanjing experience did not work out for him; however, it appears to have had a significant impact on his future career: he returned to China in 1988 to direct a European Union funded project in Beijing, married a Chinese woman, stayed in China for twenty years and became president of InterChina Consulting.

In the summer of 2008, Helen Pham, a sophomore majoring in business and finance with an East Asian Studies minor at Truman State University, studied Chinese intensively for five weeks at Shanghai University (2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008). While studying abroad, Pham visited cultural sites and other places in Beijing, Shanghai, Suzhou and Hangzhou, and she also immersed herself more deeply in China's history and culture by taking afternoon classes in Chinese history, literature, knitting and calligraphy (2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008). Pham viewed the study abroad as useful in advancing her career prospects, noting, "I hope to explore international business opportunities ... I wanted to use this study abroad experience to familiarize myself with a government, economy and culture unlike my own," and left China with many wonderful memories of this experience (2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008, p. 11).

Study at Chinese Universities

Hashim and Zhiliang (2003) conducted research on stress perceived by 82 African and 74 Western second semester freshman students studying at eleven universities in three cities in China. A 30-item survey was used to collect data from the participants, divided into four possible stress source areas, intrapersonal, interpersonal, environmental and academic, and the results reveal that academic stress followed by interpersonal stress were the top two stress sources noted by both African and Western students and male and female students (Hashim & Zhiliang, 2003). Hashim and Zhiliang (2003) suggest that stress management programs, ways of preparing for and coping with stress, should be considered by departments of foreign student affairs and the China Scholarship Council to help foreign students studying in China deal with various kinds of stress.

International School Study

Sheard (2008) shares input from informal surveys in December 2006 of former expatriate students from the United States and other countries around the world who she taught during the two years she worked at Hangzhou International School in China. Sheard (2008) notes the

growing number of students, like those she taught, who are known as Third Culture Kids (TCKs) due to their spending a period of their childhood living outside their home country, due to the increase in global business which is a growing contributor to some families living abroad along with those living abroad for diplomatic, military and missionary reasons. Sheard (2008) notes that TCKs share many commonalities with gifted children, and she shares data showing a considerably higher college graduation rate and graduation rate with honors among TCKs compared to non-TCKs. Sheard (2008) points out negative effects encountered by TCKs upon returning to their home country, including a sense of alienation from their one-country peers and in typical classroom settings, lack of one-country peers' ability to relate to TCKs' experiences living abroad, ways in which TCKs don't match features of their home culture and receive differential treatment, including resentment from some teachers. She also points out positive aspects:

Do the benefits of increased global awareness outweigh the risks? The answer is clearly yes. All the TCK respondents noted that they enjoy benefits from their overseas experiences. The benefits the students mentioned include greater levels of toleration, an ability to behave differently with different people, recognition that negotiation is a necessary part of the world, and a heightened awareness of different people, ideas, and cultures. (p. 34)

Pre-Service Professional Training/Internships (Teaching and Nursing)

Deaf Education Student-Teaching Internship. Martin, Hussey, Sicoli, and Sheng (1999) review an 8-week teaching internship at the Dalian School for the Deaf in Dalian, China in 1998 by two U.S. students in Gallaudet University's master's program in deaf education. The two students chosen for this first of its kind internship abroad had strong academic records, and they committed to taking twice-weekly tutorials in basic Chinese Sign Language and basic written Mandarin before going to China as well as studying Chinese history and culture (Martin, Hussey, Sicoli, & Sheng, 1999). Early on in the internship, the two interns began building bridges in the following areas: communication, teaching methods, expectations for deaf learners, intercultural understanding and educational philosophy (Martin et al., 1999). The internship was followed closely in China, where a television documentary was filmed and aired in December 1998. The interns' experience in China appears to have contributed to an increase in respect for deaf teachers and Chinese teachers using signed Chinese when teaching deaf students in China (Martin et al., 1999). The interns kept daily journals and activity logs, and analysis of these records shows evolution, development and growth in their views of deaf education in China, adaptation to Chinese culture, professional growth as teachers and personal growth (Martin et al., 1999).

Elementary Teacher Training. Zhao, Meyers, and Meyers (2009) conducted a qualitative research study on ten U.S. undergraduate elementary pre-service teachers, aged 21 to 55, from a large university in the Southeast part of the U.S. They took part in a four-week study abroad in the capital city of a southwestern province of China as part of their final field experience in the program, which also included spending ten weeks in a culturally diverse U.S. school before going to China. In China, the participants had homestays, were placed in one of two schools and taught three English classes a day to an average of 30 to 50 students per class, visited historically and culturally significant places, attended a variety of cultural and educational events, worked on scholarly projects with Chinese faculty and reflected on their personal and professional development (Zhao, Meyers, & Meyers, 2009). Zhao et al. (2009) relay the following findings from their research:

Data analysis indicated that the overseas teaching experience in China had a notable impact on the participants in terms of their understanding of a different culture and ways of working with non-English speaking students ... these ten elementary student teachers' culturally responsive pedagogical stances appeared to have grown and expanded since the trip abroad. Five themes emerged from the data analysis: understanding and respecting different cultures; developing empathy with and for second-language learners; exchanging teaching strategies and resources; reflecting on professional and personal growth; and initiating a proactive stance as culturally responsive change agents. (p. 302)

Nursing Training. Hu, Andreatta, Yu, and Li (2010) reviewed three two-week study abroad programs attended by nursing students from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro in 2007, 2008 and 2009 in Wuhan, China, a city of about 9 million people. The nursing students collaborated with students and staff at Wuhan University's Hope School of Nursing. Seven nursing students participated in 2007, eleven participated in 2008 and twelve nursing students and two anthropology students, studying medical anthropology, participated in 2009 (Hu, Andreatta, Yu, & Li, 2010). The students spent the first few days sightseeing at historical sites in and near Beijing before going to Wuhan, where they worked with Chinese nursing students in various practical nursing and learning experiences, including a local community assessment. They did home visits, participated in a health education project and health fair, visited traditional and Chinese medicine hospitals and had a discussion on health care with directors of community health centers (Hu et al., 2010). These experiences helped the students better understand the Chinese health care system and cultural practices and beliefs regarding health care (Hu et al., 2010). On the benefits of study abroad, Hu et al. (2010) point out:

Study abroad experiences can enhance students' international perspective, facilitate personal and professional growth, develop cultural competence skills, and help students better understand other cultures and global issues The international community health nursing experience in China provided students with opportunities to become

immersed in Chinese culture, examine the health care system in China, and see the Chinese people and the world from a different perspective ... Through their experiences, students learned how to appreciate and respect a culture that is different from their own and enhanced their skills in providing culturally competent care to diverse populations in the United States. (p. 499)

Ethnographic Research and Field Work

Change in Cities. Brewer (2010) presents a case study of a partnership between Henan University in Kaifeng, China, and Beloit College, a liberal arts college in Wisconsin. Beloit was particularly interested in Kaifeng as a study abroad partner due to there being a small number of Americans studying there. Kaifeng was willing to host Beloit faculty visits and implement a course which would require Beloit students to go off campus, get involved in the local community and thus benefit from experiential and cultural learning (Brewer, 2010). In 2006, Beloit College and Henan University began to exchange students as part of their partnership, a couple of Beloit faculty visited Henan to explore the city to see how it could be used in one of Beloit's Cities in Transition courses and a few recent Beloit graduates went to teach English at Henan (Brewer, 2010). Brewer (2011) notes the benefits to faculty development through their visits to China and involvement in Chinese Cities in Transition courses, pointing out, "... a faculty development seminar based in Shanghai with an extended excursion to Anhui Province had brought together an interdisciplinary group of faculty interested in connecting their teaching and research to China" (p. 202). Brewer (2011) emphasizes the benefits to students participating in Cities in Transition workshops, "...complex urban locations seemed ideal for encouraging students to adopt cross-disciplinary perspectives on great historical and cultural forces, the effects of globalization, the human impact on the environment, and social issues" (p. 202). Beloit faculty have benefited from their visits to Henan through deeper ties to the curriculum they teach on China and in the Chinese Cities in Transition course there, and Brewer (2010) notes the impact on Beloit students:

The ethnographic research projects they have conducted in Kaifeng -- for example, on night markets, a Halal restaurant, and a Catholic church and its hospice -- have stretched them linguistically, culturally, intellectually, and personally. The projects and their studies at the university have allowed them to truly engage with local people and environments and change their own perspectives and assumptions. (p. 94)

Other benefits students gained from participation in the Chinese Cities in Transition course include learning how to engage and interact in a respectful way in the daily life of a foreign city, increased understanding of the city students study in, developing mapping skills in a foreign city, learning how to get around a foreign city on foot and through using public transportation skills, developing interviewing skills, increasing confidence in communicating with strangers in a foreign country and a greater understanding of oneself as an American (Brewer, 2011).

Riggio, Sapolis, and Chen (2011) discuss a 2009 summer study abroad program offered by Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, “Connections: Boomtowns of the Yangtze River,” which took 21 students and three Trinity faculty through four Chinese megacities along the Yangtze River: Chongqing, a city of seven million projected to reach 22 million by 2020; Wuhan, an industrial city known as “the Chicago of China”; Nanjing, an industrial city with a rich cultural history; and Shanghai, which is compared to New York due to its importance in finance and trade. The study abroad includes three courses taught during the program: “Megacities of the Yangtze: Challenges and Opportunities,” a sociology course; “River Cities of China: The History of Urban Culture Along the Yangtze,” a history course; and “Environmental Challenges Posed by Urban Life Along the Yangtze,” an environmental studies course (Riggio, Sapolis, & Chen, 2011). Riggio et al. (2011) note the experiential learning value of the program, its benefits in preparing students for an urban and globalized world, and how it integrates “... the humanistic, social scientific, and physical scientific perspectives on pressing urban issues in the US and Chinese contexts” (p. 182). On the value of the study abroad program, Riggio et al. (2011) point out its impact, in giving students, “... a real world education, while helping them to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Our goal is to prepare them for their careers, future study, and their roles as global citizens by giving them critical urban and international experience while they are students” (p. 188).

Chinese Healthcare System & Medical Practice. Leonard (2012) discusses his three-month experience, when he was a junior in Chinese studies at the University of Pennsylvania, doing ethnographic field work research on the Chinese healthcare system in the summer of 2009 in the Guangzhou Institute of Respiratory Disease at First Hospital in Guangzhou, China. Leonard (2012) spent time with practicing Chinese physicians and Chinese medical student interns, gained a firsthand experience of China’s healthcare system in this setting, and he notes, “Many of the normative features of the Chinese medical profession -- its chain of command, commitment to medical ethics, and scientific orientation -- are highly comparable to the working lives of American physicians” (p. 299). Leonard (2012) elaborates on the two healthcare systems:

American hospitals are quite different. In general, they are more modern and less efficient....Every process takes more time, more paperwork, and more manpower in America....At the same time, physicians in China and America have more in common than ever before. Both groups stand at the crossroads of major political efforts to expand access to quality medical care for millions of individuals without the means to afford it. (p. 312)

International Business, Economics and Marketing Study, Research/Field Work

International Business. Kelm (2011) discusses the use of social media, including blogs with daily entries of experiences while abroad, video postings on YouTube and an online photo

database, as part of a two-week study abroad in China in 2011, which included company visits, trips to tourist spots and small consulting projects in groups. Thirty MBA students from the University of Texas at Austin took part. Kelm (2011) describes the theoretical underpinnings of the program, “From a theoretical vantage point, blending social media and innovative technologies with business communication pedagogy results in a strong application of many of the concepts found within social constructivism ...” (p. 507). Kelm (2011) elaborates, “The company visits, tourist activities, and consulting projects are designed to help students learn about the cultural and professional aspects of international business” (p. 509). The LESCANT (Language, Environment, Social Organization, Context, Authority, Non-Verbal, Time) photo database and video clips on YouTube incorporated elements of David Victor’s LESCANT model, which is used to teach students about the interaction of culture and business, and that Kelm (2011) notes stands for, “... seven areas where cultural difference may affect communication: language, environment, social organization, context, authority, nonverbal, and time” (p. 512). Students on this study abroad benefitted in many ways, including gaining increased intercultural awareness, socially constructing meaning of their experiences by participating in collaborative learning activities, working toward a goal, building on previous knowledge and using reflection in the learning process (Kelm, 2011).

International Business and Economics. Joshua Austin, a public relations and political science student, went to Shanghai and Beijing, China from June 1-13, 2005 as part of a business and economics study abroad program at West Virginia University (Wilson, 2005). The group toured Tiananmen Square in Beijing and the Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone (WFTZ) in Shanghai and were guests of the Shanghai municipal government (Wilson, 2005). Austin noted the importance of understanding China and its culture, “Unless the US can understand Chinese culture and business, we run the risk of lagging behind the growing world-or worse, being surpassed as the world’s superpower” (Wilson, 2005, p. 15).

International Marketing. Charlebois and Giberson (2010) discuss the “Beyond Borders of a Classroom” program, which has sent students to several countries, including China, since 2005. The program involves the students’ home university, faculty of business, corporate partners and Business Trade and Export Partnership, and only those who win a competition in the first semester of the program continue on to the advanced international marketing class in the second semester (Charlebois & Giberson, 2010). A team of three students working on a multinational business project involving swine genetics won the competition in the winter of 2006 and went to China as part of the program (Charlebois & Giberson, 2010). Benefits to students include an increase in self-confidence among many students, and Charlebois and Giberson (2010) summarize the program as follows:

The “Beyond Borders of a Classroom” initiative is consistent with the recent push toward active, experiential learning pedagogies (Karns 2005). This program is an amalgam between many learning pedagogies, including a live case study, a case/business

competition, an internship, and a field trip. All are considered by many as great learning experiences (Smith and Van Doren 2004). This program may have created a combination of pedagogies that upholds a form of “transcendental learning” -- from classroom, to boardroom, and into the real world. (p. 170)

Environmental Study

Yang (2001) conducted a three-week early summer study abroad program as part of a spring semester course he taught at Bryant College, “Environmental Study in China”. Sixteen students participated, mostly sophomores, two of whom were not Americans, who majored in various business disciplines. Yang (2001) explains the rationale for this course:

I hoped that it would offer students a rare opportunity for hands-on learning in environmental studies and a unique cultural experience in a foreign country. Through reading, discussion, and the study trip to China, students would gain both a conceptual framework and firsthand experience about the impact of the fast-growing Chinese economy on its local environments. I wanted to involve business students in real issues of science and technology, while exposing them to Chinese culture, arts, and history through travel within the country and interaction with local students, scientists, administrators, and business leaders. (pp. 3-4)

The course objectives included the following: “1. To cultivate international perspectives; 2. To develop a coherent interdisciplinary approach...; 3. To improve students’ problem-solving ability; 4. To apply classroom information in the real world; 5. To enhance personal responsibility and team effort” (p. 4). Students researched an environmental topic in China during the semester, gathered information during the study abroad, kept daily journals to record their observations and reflections, and wrote a paper on their research topic afterwards (Yang, 2001). During the program, the students attended seminars with scientists, government officials and business leaders, and the group traveled over 4,000 miles, through six big cities and rural areas in eastern China, where they visited major U.S. companies like Coca-Cola, Motorola and Kodak, historical sites and other locales, including the Shanwang fossil bed and Taihu Laboratory for Lake Ecosystem Research, where they observed and discussed various environmental issues (Yang, 2001). Most students felt they benefitted through active learning which increased their independent thinking skills and interest in the course subject matter, and they came back with a greater appreciation for America’s environmental conservation efforts (Yang, 2001).

Technological Research

Wahby (2003) went to China from May 27 to June 10, 2000, to administer a study abroad program on Phase II of the construction of the Three Gorges Dam Project (TGDP) in Hubei Province. There are many advantages and disadvantages associated with the TGDP, including

the pros of better flood control, enormous hydroelectric power generation and subsequent reduction of coal use, and cons like the submerging of many villages, towns and cities, displacement of about two million people, loss of cultural sites and fertile farmland, and a negative impact on many kinds of wildlife (Wahby, 2003). Wahby (2003) notes the tremendous implications of the effects of the TGDP, including, "... water conservancy, hydroelectric power generation, environment, ecology, geology, geography, economy, politics, transportation, society, culture, business, industry, and even technology itself" (p. 19).

Travel/Study and Travel

Travel/Study. Penington and Wildermuth (2005) conducted research, involving comprehensive interviews lasting about forty-five minutes, on eight students at a small private college in the Midwestern United States, aged 20-27, with various majors, who participated in a three-week travel/study course in China. In addition to the travel/study abroad, the students in this four-credit course attended five pre-departure meetings, learned at least some basic Chinese vocabulary before the trip, attended class lectures, wrote about their experiences and gave presentations and held discussions before or after the trip (Penington & Wildermuth, 2005). Penington and Wildermuth (2005) note that researchers coded transcripts of the post-trip interviews and,

... labeled the accounts according to the component (s) of the Campina-Bacote (2002) intercultural competency model that they most exemplified. Campina-Bacote's (2002) components of: 1) knowledge, 2) awareness, 3) desire, 4) encounter, and 5) skills were thus used to structure the general categories used. (p. 172)

Students increased their intercultural knowledge and communicative competence, developed greater empathy and skills such as listening, asking good questions and nonverbal sensitivity, and as Penington and Wildermuth (2005) point out, "...they gained in self-knowledge, and ultimately self-confidence, through being placed in new and often challenging situations" (p. 180).

Travel. Jefferies and Lepp (2012) present a study of experiences that they analyzed from 21 undergraduate students with eight different majors at a university in the Midwestern United States who attended a study abroad in China or Uganda in 2009. 19 participants gave at least one description of "very special, wonderful, and memorable experiences" that they had during the study abroad (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012). Jefferies and Lepp (2012) elaborate on their findings:

Although travel lasted between two and three weeks, 51 experiences were recalled from 19 participants. This represents a 34% increase over the 38 experiences recalled by the same 19 participants after a 9-month academic year. Analysis of the data from novel settings revealed three primary themes, which begin to explain what made the experiences extraordinary. Primary themes were outdoor adventure, reflection, and cross-cultural interaction ... (p. 45)

Musical Performance Tour (University Marching Band)

Romines (2008) presents findings from online survey results received from 225 of 300 University of Georgia Redcoat Marching Band students who visited Beijing and were the sole performers in large stadiums for 90 minute to two hour performances in five Chinese cities, Xiamen, Shanghai, Nanjing, Chengdu and Kunming, in May 2006. 18% of the students majored in an area related to music. Overall the students had 85 different majors and were a mix of all undergraduate years (Romines, 2008). Students felt very well-received by the Chinese, and 88.8% noted that the trip made a positive difference to them in terms of U.S.-China relations (Romines, 2008). 196 students responded to a question on how the trip changed their life, with the following results:

59.6% included comments regarding learning about another culture, 26.2% responded that they had a greater appreciation for America, 13.2% stated they had an increased desire to travel, 8% commented on the universal nature of people/music, and 6% identified aspects of personal growth. (Romines, 2008, pp. 82-83)

On what the students learned during the tour, 48.4% noted Chinese culture and 24% gained insight on Chinese perceptions of Americans (Romines, 2008). Providing further insight on the survey results and findings from the band's China tour, Romines (2008) highlights the powerful impact a short-term international trip can have:

Findings illustrate that even with a short-term study-abroad experience, the students' knowledge and perceptions of the world around them were dramatically influenced. Survey results reinforce the concept that international travel furthers the promotion of personal growth, respect for cultural diversity, and an interest in the global community. (p. 76)

College/University Study Abroad Administration

Byrnes (2005) reflects on his experiences in 2003 during his time staying in China as his university's Site Director for a study abroad program in which eight students took part in at Sichuan University in Chengdu, China. Byrnes (2005) discusses various ways people deal with the situations they encounter while spending time abroad and contrasts two extremes of how some people view the cultural differences: "One tendency is to romanticize the cultural differences encountered. Another tendency is to rush to a negative judgment about the specific people involved, and about their culture more generally" (p. 231). Byrnes (2005) suggests that instead of viewing the culture in which one is immersed from one of these extremes, one could take the perspective of an "other-regarding traveler", and on this he elaborates:

Other-regarding travel emphasizes cultural differences as opportunities for heightened self-understanding and fosters good will rather than ill-will among locals....With respect to attitudes, other-regarding travelers are aware of their limitations and how those limitations tend to confound cross-cultural interactions. They reflect on their own role in challenging cross-cultural incidents. (p. 239)

Through his experiences during the study abroad, Byrnes (2005) formulated the concept of an other-regarding traveler, and he recommends study abroad site directors prepare study abroad participants by raising their awareness of culturally challenging situations they will encounter, impressing on them the importance of carefully reflecting on these experiences and viewing them as learning opportunities, and enabling further processing and sharing of experiences with others during a post-study abroad seminar back at the students' home campus.

Williams (1993) discusses his experiences as a professor at St. Andrews College in the United States leading study abroad programs. In 1989, Williams (1993) took a group of ten St. Andrews students to study in Beijing where they studied in an intensive Chinese language program at Beijing Foreign Language Normal College from late January to late May. Many of the demonstrations and events, including martial law and revolts, that occurred in the "Beijing Spring" unfolded while the group was there, where they were only a 20-minute bicycle ride from Tiananmen Square (Williams, 1993). Williams (1993) notes benefits students gained through the planning of and participation in the study abroad, including enhancement of academic course work, ownership of program outcomes, increased personal understanding and appreciation of other cultures. Williams (1993) gained skills and confidence in dealing with difficult international situations, which would help him in his future study abroad program planning and execution, and four students who participated in the China study abroad that he led went on to work in Asia, including two in China, one in Japan and one in Thailand, and another student went on to pursue an advanced degree in U.S.-Asian relations.

Parsons (2010) presents the following main outcomes of study abroad programs which other researchers and sources have noted:

- (a) foreign language acquisition (Barrows, 1981; Carlson, Burn, Useem, & Yachimowicz, 1991; Engle & Engle, 2004; Hansel, 1986);
- (b) intercultural sensitivity (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006; Engle & Engle, 2004; Paige, Cohen, & Shively, 2004);
- (c) a decrease in xenophobia, fear, or ethnic distance (McCabe, 1994);
- (d) intercultural communication skills and friendships (Dwyer & Peters, 2004);
- (e) increased self-awareness or awareness of one's own cultural perspective (British Columbia Centre for International Education [BCCIE], 2001; Cash, 1993; Dwyer & Peters, 2004);
- (f) increased international and cross-cultural interest (Carlson & Widaman, 1988; Church, 1982);
- (g) increased interest in and concern about international affairs and politics (Carlson et al., 1991; Carlson & Widaman, 1988);
- (h) increased awareness and understanding of differences between nations, philosophies, cultures, and ways of life (BCCIE, 2001; Hansel, 1986);
- (i) increased disapproval of U.S. foreign policy (Carlson et al., 1991);

(j) increased knowledge of the host country or culture (Carlson et al., 1991; Farrell & Suvedi, 2003). (p. 315)

Table 2 pairs Parson's outcomes of study abroad programs with corresponding supporting matches from the relevant literature sources that were reviewed in this search of results of "study abroad" and "China". Some of these matches have been inferred based on the information presented in the literature; where terminology is not exactly the same as Parsons, relevant supporting matches were made where one could reasonably infer or demonstrate support from the information presented in the literature. Some of the stated outcomes and benefits stated in the literature review are from findings of research studies. Others are subjective, based on reported perceptions of a student, former student, professor or administrator of the change, effect or outcome of his/her own or others' experiences studying abroad in China.

Table 2 Parson's Outcomes of Study Abroad Programs Matched with Relevant Supporting Literature Sources Reviewed in Search of "Study Abroad" and "China"

Parsons' (2010) List of Outcomes of Study Abroad Programs	Relevant Supporting Literature Sources Reviewed in Search of "Study Abroad" and "China"
foreign language acquisition	Liu, 2010; Winke and Teng, 2010; Du, 2013; Dines, 2008; Borgonjon, 2008; 2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008; Martin et al., 1999; Brewer, 2011; Leonard, 2012; Penington and Wildermuth, 2005; Williams, 1993
intercultural sensitivity	Sheard, 2008; Martin et al., 1999; Zhao et al., 2009; Hu et al., 2010; Brewer, 2011; Riggio et al., 2011; Leonard, 2012; Kelm, 2011; Yang, 2001; Wahby, 2003; Penington and Wildermuth, 2005; Romines, 2008; Byrnes, 2005; Williams, 1993
a decrease in xenophobia, fear, or ethnic distance	Sheard, 2008; Zhao et al., 2009; Brewer, 2011; Romines, 2008
intercultural communication skills and friendships	Winke and Teng, 2010; Sheard, 2008; Martin et al., 1999; Zhao et al., 2009; Hu et al., 2010; Brewer, 2011; Riggio et al., 2011; Leonard, 2012; Kelm, 2011; Yang, 2001; Penington and Wildermuth, 2005; Byrnes, 2005; Williams, 1993
increased self-awareness or awareness of one's own cultural perspective	Sheard, 2008; Zhao et al., 2009; Hu et al., 2010; Brewer, 2011; Riggio et al., 2011; Leonard, 2012; Kelm, 2011; Yang, 2001; Wahby, 2003; Penington and Wildermuth, 2005; Romines, 2008; Byrnes, 2005; Williams, 1993
increased international and cross-cultural interest	Hu et al., 2010; Brewer, 2011; Riggio et al., 2011; Leonard, 2012; 2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008; Kelm, 2011; Yang, 2001; Wahby, 2003; Jefferies and Lepp, 2012; Romines, 2008; Byrnes, 2005; Williams, 1993
increased interest in and concern about international affairs and politics	Hu et al., 2010; Brewer, 2011; Riggio et al., 2011; Leonard, 2012; 2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008; Kelm, 2011; Yang, 2001; Wahby, 2003; Romines, 2008; Byrnes, 2005; Williams, 1993
increased awareness and understanding of differences between nations, philosophies, cultures, and ways of life	Winke and Teng, 2010; Dines, 2008; Sheard, 2008; Martin et al., 1999; Zhao et al., 2009; Hu et al., 2010; Brewer, 2011; Riggio et al., 2011; Leonard, 2012; Wilson, 2005; 2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008; Kelm, 2011; Yang, 2001; Wahby, 2003; Penington and Wildermuth, 2005; Jefferies and Lepp, 2012; Romines, 2008; Byrnes, 2005; Williams, 1993
increased knowledge of the host country or culture	Winke and Teng, 2010; Dines, 2008; Sheard, 2008; Martin et al., 1999; Zhao et al., 2009; Hu et al., 2010; Brewer, 2011; Riggio et al., 2011; Leonard, 2012; Wilson, 2005; 2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008; Kelm, 2011; Yang, 2001; Wahby, 2003; Penington and Wildermuth, 2005; Jefferies and Lepp, 2012; Romines, 2008; Byrnes, 2005; Williams, 1993

In addition to the benefits and outcomes of study abroad listed by Parsons (2010), other benefits and outcomes from education abroad in China have been culled from this literature review. Table 3 presents these, matched with the relevant supporting literature sources.

Table 3. Additional Outcomes of Education Abroad Programs in China Matched with Relevant Supporting Literature Sources Reviewed in Search of “Study Abroad” and “China”

Additional Outcomes of Education Abroad Programs in China	Relevant Supporting Literature Sources Reviewed in Search of “Study Abroad” and “China”
(pre- and in-service) professional training, development & service	Martin et al., 1999; Zhao et al., 2009; Hu et al., 2010; Brewer, 2010; Brewer, 2011; Byrnes, 2005; Williams, 1993; Wahby, 2003
influence on, improvement or advancement of career prospects	Liu, 2010; Kelm, 2011; Riggio et al., 2011; Williams, 1993; Dines, 2008; Borgonjon, 2008; 2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008
increased self-confidence	Brewer, 2011; Charlebois and Giberson, 2010; Williams, 1993; Penington and Wildermuth, 2005
increase in special, wonderful, and memorable experiences	2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008; Jefferies and Lepp, 2012; Williams, 1993; Romines, 2008
contribution toward stress (academic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, environmental)	Hashim and Zhiliang, 2003
influencing change in host country	Martin et al., 1999
increased skill navigating in a foreign country	Brewer, 2011
increased appreciation for America’s environmental conservation efforts	Yang, 2001
development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills	Riggio et al., 2011; Kelm, 2011; Yang, 2001
increased desire to travel	2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008; Romines, 2008
increased motivation to learn	2008 Study Abroad Winners, 2008

Table 4 presents a comprehensive list of the benefits and outcomes of education abroad programs in China which are supported through the literature sources reviewed.

Table 4. List of all Benefits and Outcomes of Education Abroad Programs in China

foreign language acquisition intercultural sensitivity a decrease in xenophobia, fear, or ethnic distance intercultural communication skills and friendships increased self-awareness or awareness of one’s own cultural perspective increased international and cross-cultural interest increased interest in and concern about international affairs and politics increased awareness and understanding of differences between nations, philosophies, cultures, and ways of life increased knowledge of the host country or culture (pre- and in-service) professional training, development & service influence on, improvement or advancement of career prospects increased self-confidence increase in special, wonderful, and memorable experiences contribution toward stress (academic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, environmental) influencing change in host country increased skill navigating in a foreign country increased appreciation for America’s environmental conservation efforts development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills increased desire to travel increased motivation to learn

Conclusion

China's economic and political rise has been coupled with an increased interest in Chinese culture, language and history. With China's growing influence internationally, proficiency in Chinese is viewed as useful in advancing career prospects. China has put considerable effort into improving its status internationally through "soft" power approaches like cultural programs and educational measures aimed at increasing Chinese language study (Peck, 2012).

Education abroad in China is an avenue for studying Chinese, increasing understanding and improving intercultural competence. The U.S. Department of State Diplomacy in Action (n.d.a), quoting Michelle Obama's comments on January 19, 2011 at Howard University, provides further insight on the value and benefits of study abroad:

...studying abroad isn't just an important part of a well-rounded educational experience. It's also becoming increasingly important for success in the modern global economy. Getting ahead in today's workplaces isn't just about the skills you bring from the classroom. It's also about the experience you have with the world beyond our borders — with people, and languages, and cultures that are very different from our own.

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